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FREEDOM



By ANNA WETHERFORD

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FAITH

O Faith, sweet Faith, come hover close to me,
Spread thy soft wings o'er my fear-chilled
heart;
Teach me to rest in peace with God and thee.

For when the fire of human love grows cold
I find no joy in this heart of mine;
'Tis only faith in God that feeds my soul.

O Faith, sweet Faith, I feel thy power o'er me;
My heart found love 'neath thy shelt'ring
wings,
And now I rest in peace with God and thee.

—ANNA WEATHERFORD.

FREEDOM

Love touched my heart and led me away,
Among sweet blossoms bright and gay;

My thoughts went up in great delight,
Where angels kept watch o'er the world by
night;

I heard the airy flutter of bees and birds on the
wing,
This was God's love world, free to every
living thing.

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FAITH AND FREEDOM

OUT of the starless night,
into the silence of all ages
men have sent up their
prayers to an unknown God.
Ever since the beginning of time
the world through faith has been
slowly but surely coming out from
the wilderness of human doubts
and depressing fears into the sweet
and peaceful pastures of the soul.
Man has at last found that his free-
dom does not lie beyond, but rather
here and now within his reach.
Therefore, the world is rejoicing in
a more hopeful knowledge. We are

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turning away from the old depraved and appalling belief that burdens are God-sent, also that we must bear our sorrows in patience and in meekness.

This old belief in many instances embittered men on their whole outlook of life. We have awakened to the glorious fact that we do not have to die in order to gain our freedom; right here is where we begin our mental journey into the land of right-thinking, which means freedom. We need but lift our eyes in silence and, behold,—we see an ever-present

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love hovering tenderly around us all.

We have found, too, that we cannot quench our thirst from the empty cup of ignorance, which is the only *hell* there is. The divine intelligence, which causes the earth to bring forth her perfumed buds and flowers, springs from the same unity of love which exists between God and man. This intelligence is ever teaching us that sooner or later every one must learn to walk alone with God, for there is no man wise enough to solve another man's life-problems.

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We find our happiness is self-sustained when we live in the paradise of loving rather than in seeking to be loved. The world's sorrows will flee before the heart that's filled with love, just as the snow melts before the sun. Thus we see love sweeping the earth clean of every unholy thought and thing.

Man should receive a lesson from the pond-lily, which grows out of a mire pool into the glorious sunlight of freedom. Just so with all false conditions of life; there is never a time so dark nor so per-

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plexing but that man can grow out of his wrong way of thinking into the harmony of right living. We need not become sluggards in the race because some one else has had a better start in life; we can always use the progress of others as stepping stones of faith in our own race for freedom.

If progress is slow, it may be because the joys of the world's treasures are drawn too tightly around our heart-strings. 'Tis true progress comes by experience, therefore we should take each experience as our training teacher,

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and know that the soul feeds upon pure thoughts just as the dry earth drinks in the rain that falls upon it. Men sometimes become sick and sorrowful, because they have been starving their souls by trying to feed upon the husks of materiality. This explains our slowness to understand and accept the voice of freedom as taught by the Christ.

Man's hardest master is mortal self. This task-master is always presenting doubts and fears, which lead man into a false and fleeting sense outside of the straight and narrow path. The only way to

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liberate this self from the thralldom of the world's ignorance is by knowing the allness of good. In this way we are making ready for the higher truths which come from the one mind,—God.

We find this sweet faith in the child; out of his young eyes he seems to tell us that he knows its power. Youth lives in the inward rejoicing of faith. Let him choose his own path and he will put man's distorted illusions firmly under his feet. His soul feels only the need of turning to all that is good and beautiful in nature. He

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is conscious of his kinship with the golden sunset; his wings of freedom are lifted to oneness with God. 'Tis the spiritual, which leads us to apprehend that man's being is the law of life which can never be mocked by man-made laws of supposed death or disease. The power of God, which belongs to man as the son of God, will deliver the world from the falsehoods of human beliefs. It is good to know that all man's mistakes can be turned away forever, and forgotten, as they truly belong to a false, fleeting world outside

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of the spiritual universe of God's creating.

Love's mission on earth is to uplift human nature and show humanity how to put off all that is unlike good. The Master taught that all evil is a self-constituted lie, that it has no part in the real man. All mortal mentality or consciousness of evil as power is but a belief in ignorance. The Master separated the tares from the wheat by knowing that all evil thoughts originated in the hearts of mankind and not in God, —the intelligence of the universe.

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Man's joys are becoming more real as the dead past fades from consciousness. We can see love's infinite harmony undimmed by mortal fear, and our spiritual gaze sweeps the past, present and future into the glorious understanding where we can commune with God as easily as a little child talks with its parents. We must therefore strive for this sweet sense of companionship, which will entitle us to say: "The Father hath not left me alone, for I do always those things that please Him." The road to sonship with the Father is

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the road of faith, which leads to understanding, for there is no other way. "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world."

Truth itself must be known. We must advance out of mortal ignorance and take on the immortal views of spiritual intelligence. Every right thought is an expression of life, a part of the substance and intelligence of man's being.

There is no death for the love which requires all eternity for man to send up his endless prayer of

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thanksgiving from heart to heaven. This love of truth will remain firm in the unselfish heart; it will flower into a power to think and speak and act rightly; it will illumine the very earth with spiritual understanding.

All good books truly have their place in the line of instruction; but no number of books can ever take the place or lessen the necessity for a quiet communion in our own hearts with God. This is a pleasure and a duty that the richest man in the world is unable to pay another to perform for him. This

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privilege of going to the Father in secret is man's *greatest blessing*.

Truth is the door to our Father's house. When we come to recognize the fact that all thoughts which touch our consciousness must be pure before we can understand our true birthright, we then awake and realize the necessity for wisdom to keep this door closed from all evil that would steal our God-given faith. By keeping guard over our consciousness, we allow only God's thoughts to enter in. By being always on guard, we hold the power to keep all

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falsehoods on the outside. In other words, were it not for wrong, sinful thoughts there would be neither sorrow nor death.

Often in our haste to finish the day, the faith that we need most seems to fade from us, and we gulp down the bitter with the sweet. Thus we are failing to use our power of freedom. To doubt seems an easy matter for all of us, yet, in spite of our doubts and changing fancies, when we search the heart we always find a remnant of faith awaiting us. Once more we gladly take

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courage and go forth to tell or to hear some new thing. Knowing that we should not look afar off for the treasure that lives in the heart of each one, do not our doubts become a hindrance to something better?

Let us look at any human enterprise. Is it not an expression of the minds of those behind it? Does it not reflect the character of its promoters? We may be able to gloss over our imperfections, yet the very quality of our laughter or the light in our eyes will be sure to tell our true spirit; for we

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read memory's pages on each other's face. Our thoughts are the hands of the painter, depicting the grace of a saint or the hardening of a sinner's heart. Our words are all in vain, for our face will not receive what the heart has rejected. We see the artist working in bronze, pottery or iron; we can also see the thoughts in the heart leaving its touches upon mankind.

The deplorable habit of voicing wrong thoughts not only injures us but deprives us of peace and joy and retards our advancement.

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The best way to divest all wrong of seeming power is to form the habit of letting only the good be true and real to us. This habit we acquire only through patience and obedience to the voice of truth.

If we are faithful in making the best of every opportunity that reflects good, we will bring sunshine into the darkened consciousness of the hardened world. A cheery smile of love will soften the bitter heart, drive away the gloom of despair and lift the fallen from a condition of doubt into faith wherein love will supply every

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need, whether that need be physical or spiritual.

In order that our faith become full-blown, we must develop gradually into the knowledge of the truth that makes all mankind free. This faith brightens our pathway, it renews our strength and gives us understanding to know that we are one with the Father, just as a ray of light is one with the sun. Though we may stumble and fall in doubt, we can rejoice that there are those who have had courage to grow from faith to understanding.

It is well to be sure that a faith

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in mortal self is not lurking in a darkened corner of our consciousness. Our Master said that he could do nothing but what he saw the Father do; in other words, he taught man to look for the divine reflection outside of mortal self. "Lord, thou hast been our dwelling-place in all generations."

When man finds himself travelling up this royal road of faith, the skeptic or the scoffer may say whate'er he chooses; for we know that whosoever dwells within this region is already living in his heart with God. There are times with

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all men when they would love to live lowly and simply. Our heart longs to put off its foreign pride, and veil its morrow with the Master's sweet words: "Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin. Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?"

We are all richer than we know. We only need the fresh eagerness of faith in the power of all good to make our work-a-day world what-e'er we will. Each time our faith

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is renewed, the bright side of life seems to take us right into its confidence; it tells us that the dawning of a new world is within us, and our eyes become fresh with the joy of right-seeing.

What in each of us is most worth while? Think you, man, that you can answer? Do you not know that neither man nor books—no, nor all the wisdom of the ages or the philosophies of modern days—can ever tell you the real truth about yourself? You must take faith and commune in your own heart with God; you

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must feel your own way and let God always be a living reality in your mind. The problem of success is in ourselves and not in others. There will always be room enough in our hearts to live near our highest ideals, as well as the most practical and efficient help for all mankind. When we have the right faith in God and man, we find our life overflowing with joy and gladness, for our eyes are then filled with the beauty of the infinite.

There is nothing commonplace to the heart that loves. In these

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days of "do" and "don't" we need plenty of love for the roots of faith. Otherwise doubt and fear will bargain-drive us into dreaming the day-dreams of old. Out of faith we must grow into the sweet understanding that there is no limitation for man. Thus we are trusting God, the giver of all good gifts.

Progress is the law of the infinite; therefore man must set to work in earnest to cultivate right thinking. Carlyle has said: "A thinking man is the worst enemy the prince of darkness can have."

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When we learn to be quick to forgive and slow to see our brothers' faults, then we will be spending our days in the task of making all things good, we will find freedom in the one word "Love." No standard of perfection can be found higher than our meekness in brotherly love for each other. We must rejoice and learn to be more thoughtful for whatever comes to awaken the divine quality within us. We know that our happiness does not depend upon what others think.

It is man's privilege to depend

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upon good *now*, so we may taste of heaven *here and now*. This knowledge of the truth is the Kingdom of Heaven *within*, for good alone is the spring of all man's joys, and the only good there is can never forsake us at any time, but we are constantly missing good because we do not realize that God is always with us. The law of man's being is perfect and nothing can impede our progress when we are working in love, for every one of us has a place in God's gracious plan where the manifestations of free-

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dom flow on forever. Man's immortal youth is constantly renewed in the reflection of all that is good and beautiful. Therefore Freedom must reign supreme.

God is the infinite law giver and law maker. The mortal laws, so called, are no laws at all—but falsehoods. Every mortal law is rendered null and void by the laws of truth which give us the sweet peace in our hearts. This sweet peace we can always find when we dwell in good, for good is our only saviour.

The understanding of the spirit-

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ual facts are the only real facts for the real man. This real man is our own true selves here and now. Every good thought we hold means freedom for all mankind. We would never be ill at ease if we would meditate upon the invisible things which are always durable to the real man. When man receives one word of truth into his consciousness the transformation begins, and his faith will never cease, until his freedom is manifested in the desert of all his human hopes. Without this faith how could you

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and I struggle through the web of human existence. Man must stand upon the plane of faith where he can look above and beyond the mist of human fears. Thus we will find that the seeming mysteries which may have baffled and disheartened us are beginning to unfold their systematic beauty before our clear spiritual vision, and we find our real selves abiding in the divine consciousness of freedom.

Yes, it will lift us above and beyond memories of past failures and all anxiety as to the future.

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As one moment of real faith in God's love is a foretaste of eternity, so when man knows faith's real power, he will know all the truth about his freedom. Oh faith, you have cradled my heart tenderly in hours of song! You have taught me to enter into the peaceful tower of eternity where I could watch the petals of love unfold. This unfoldment comes to man in the quiet hours when the love of self is forgotten in seeking to know the Father above. Oh man, great has been the outcome of thy faith, and great shall be thy joy, for the

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breath of intelligence has wafted its life-giving love over the ancient wind-blown skeletons of fear. Man is indeed laying off his distorted illusions, and in his glad awakening he is outlining the dome of the great blue sky with the world's freedom.

Thus we shall awake with Paul's clear thought and John's keen vision of the new heaven and the new earth, and when this joyful wonder enters into the heart of each "We shall know the truth, and the truth shall make us free."

